

December 2013



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## Grafton County, NH FSA Updates

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### CED Notes

*The Grafton County FSA Office Staff would like to wish everyone a Merry Christmas, Happy New Year and Joyous Holiday Season!*

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#### Grafton County FSA Office

19 Archertown Rd Suite 1  
Orford, NH 03777  
Phone: 603-353-4650  
Fax: 603-353-4647

Monday-Friday 8:00-4:30

**County Executive Director:**  
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**Program Technicians:**  
Tara Hamlett  
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#### New County Committee Election Ballots To Be Mailed

The County Committee Election ballots that were mailed to producers on Nov. 4 were incorrectly printed with the producer's name and address on the back of the ballot. County committee elections must use a secret ballot so the misprinted ballots cannot be used. Please destroy or recycle the misprinted ballot. If you have already voted, your ballot will be destroyed unopened.

New ballots will be mailed to producers on December 20, 2013. These ballots will indicate that they are the corrected ballot in several places, including on the outside of the mailing, on the ballot and on the outside of the return envelope.

**The corrected ballot must be returned to the Grafton County FSA Office or postmarked by January 17, 2014.** All newly elected county committee members will take office February 18, 2014. All county committee members whose term expires on Dec. 31, 2013, will have their term

**District Director:**

Keith Farrell

[keith.farrell@nh.usda.gov](mailto:keith.farrell@nh.usda.gov)

**County Committee:**

David Clement

Jacqueline Lewis

Shirley Tullar

**NH Acting Farm Loan****Manager:**

Brian Kuper

[brian.kuper@vt.usda.gov](mailto:brian.kuper@vt.usda.gov)

**Farm Loans:**

The Concord Center

10 Ferry St Suite 212

Concord, NH 03301

Phone: 603-223-6003

Fax: 603-223-6030

**County Committee Meetings:**

The next COC meeting is

January 23, 2014 at 11:00 am

extended to January 31, 2014.

County committee members are an important component of the operations of FSA and provide a link between the agricultural community and USDA. Farmers and ranchers elected to county committees help deliver FSA programs at the local level, applying their knowledge and judgment to make decisions on commodity price support programs; conservation programs; incentive indemnity and disaster programs for some commodities; emergency programs and eligibility. FSA committees operate within official regulations designed to carry out federal laws.

To be an eligible voter, farmers and ranchers must participate or cooperate in an FSA program. A person who is not of legal voting age, but supervises and conducts the farming operations of an entire farm may also be eligible to vote.

The candidate in this year's election is:

Russell Keniston is nominated in LAA 2, Grafton County, to serve as a committee member. Russell Keniston has produced dairy, beef, corn, hay and vegetable crops for 40 years. He is an active member of NH Farm Bureau and has been since he was 18 years old. Towns included in LAA 2 are: Haverhill, Benton, Woodstock, Warren, Ellsworth, Thornton, Livermore, Waterville Valley, Wentworth, Rumney, Campton, Dorchester, Groton, Plymouth, Holderness, Ashland, Hebron, Bridgewater, Bristol, and Alexandria.

More information on county committees, such as the new 2013 fact sheet and brochures, can be found on the FSA website at [www.fsa.usda.gov/elections](http://www.fsa.usda.gov/elections) or at the Grafton County USDA Service Center.

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## 2014 Crop Acreage Reporting

**Producers now have until January 15, 2014, to report crops that have a November 15, 2013, or December 15, 2013, reporting deadline without paying a late-file fee.** New Hampshire crops under this waiver include **perennial forage, fall forage seeding, and fall-seeded small grains.** The Risk Management Agency (RMA) did not grant a waiver so producers need to consult their crop insurance agent for deadlines for insured crops.

In order to comply with FSA program eligibility requirements, all producers are encouraged to visit the Grafton County FSA office to file an accurate crop certification report by the applicable deadline.

The following acreage reporting dates are applicable for Grafton County:

November 15, 2013 – Perennial Forage, Fall Forage Seeding, Fall-Seeded Small Grains

January 2, 2014 – Honey

January 15, 2014 - Apples, Peaches

February 15, 2014 - Maple Sap

May 31, 2014 – Ornamental Nursery

July 15, 2014 – Corn, Fresh Market Sweet Corn, Spring Forage Seeding, All Other Crops

The following exceptions apply to the above acreage reporting dates:

- If the crop has not been planted by the above acreage reporting date, then the acreage must be reported no later than 15 calendar days after planting is completed.
- If a producer acquires additional acreage after the above acreage reporting date, then the acreage must be reported no later than 30 calendar days after purchase or acquiring the lease. Appropriate documentation must be provided to the county office.
- If a perennial forage crop is reported with the intended use of “cover only,” “green manure,” “left standing,” or “seed” then the acreage must be reported by July 15th.

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## **FSA Advises Producers To Anticipate Payment Reductions Due To Mandated Sequester**

USDA's Farm Service Agency (FSA) is reminding farmers and ranchers who participate in FSA programs to plan accordingly in FY2014 for automatic spending reductions known as sequestration. The Budget Control Act of 2011 (BCA) mandates that federal agencies implement automatic, annual reductions to discretionary and mandatory spending limits. For mandatory programs, the sequestration rate for FY2014 is 7.2%. Accordingly, FSA is implementing sequestration for the following programs:

- Dairy Indemnity Payment Program;
- Marketing Assistance Loans;
- Loan Deficiency Payments;
- Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program;
- 2013 Direct and Counter-Cyclical Payments;
- 2011 and 2012 Supplemental Revenue Assistance Program.

These sequester percentages reflect current law estimates; however with the continuing budget uncertainty, Congress still may adjust the exact percentage reduction. Today's announcement intends to help producers plan for the impact of sequestration cuts in FY2014.

At this time, FSA is required to implement the sequester reductions. Due to the expiration of the Farm Bill on September 30, FSA does not have the flexibility to cover these payment reductions in the same manner as in FY13. FSA will provide notification as early as practicable on the specific payment reductions.

Conservation Reserve Program payments are specifically exempt by statute from sequestration, thus these payments will not be reduced.

For information about FSA programs, visit the Grafton County USDA Service Center or go to [www.fsa.usda.gov/](http://www.fsa.usda.gov/).

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## **Beginning Farmer Loans**

FSA assists beginning farmers to finance agricultural enterprises. Under these designated farm loan programs, FSA can provide financing to eligible applicants through either direct or guaranteed loans. FSA defines a beginning farmer as a person who:

- Has operated a farm for not more than 10 years

- Will materially and substantially participate in the operation of the farm
- Agrees to participate in a loan assessment, borrower training and financial management program sponsored by FSA
- Does not own a farm in excess of 30 percent of the county's median size.

Additional program information, loan applications, and other materials are available at the Grafton County USDA Service Center. You may also visit [www.fsa.usda.gov/](http://www.fsa.usda.gov/).

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## Selected December Interest Rates

Farm Operating Loans, Direct and Microloans	1.875%
Farm Ownership Loans, Direct	4.125%
Farm Ownership Loans, Direct, Joint Financing	5.000%
Farm Ownership, Down Payment	1.500%
Emergency Loans	2.875%
Farm Storage Facility Loans, 7 year	2.000%

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## Dates to Remember

December 20, 2013	Corrected Ballots Mailed to Eligible Voters
December 25, 2013	Christmas Holiday - Office Closed
January 1, 2014	New Year's Holiday - Office Closed
January 17, 2014	Last Day to Return Corrected Ballots to USDA Service Ctr
January 20, 2014	Martin Luther King Holiday - Office Closed
January 23, 2014	County Office Committee Meeting and Ballot Count
February 18, 2014	Newly Elected COC Members Take Office

### Crop Reporting Deadlines:

January 2, 2014	Honey
January 15, 2014	Apples, Peaches
February 15, 2014	Maple Sap

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